



City of Harrisonburg Stormwater Advisory Committee

Minutes: Meeting No. 09

October 1, 2014 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Members in attendance: Kathy Holm, Daniel Michael, Dale Chestnut, Eldon Kurtz, and William Latham.

Staff/Other in attendance: Thanh Dang, Carolyn Howard, Kelley Junco, Harsit Patel, Tom Hartman, Poti Giannakouros, and John Eckman.

Review and Adopt Minutes

Kathy called for a motion to adopt the September 2014 SWAC meeting minutes. The motion was made, seconded, and passed.

Public Comment

Poti Giannakouros of Harrisonburg asked the SWAC to elaborate on what households can do to take advantage of incentives to reduce their stormwater utility fee. Poti stated that local and national research indicates that municipal ordinances give rise to demand for additional municipal ordinances, and that the tall grass and weeds ordinance has a negative effect. He said that a message that everyone cares about clean water and there is a concrete program to participate in would build public support and would build consumer good will. He requested to have more data made available to the public to analyze for data used to calculate surface areas and how billing units are rounded. He referred to a discussion at the August SWAC meeting that landlords of apartments would pass fees onto tenants through a price markup, but he is not sure that would occur. He also expressed concern about how the SWAC develops the credit program and asked the SWAC ensure that property owners are not given credit for practices they should be doing anyway.

John Eckman, Executive Director of the Friends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River, said that he is the local contact of the Choose Clean Water Coalition. He wanted the SWAC to know that he is available to help with outreach to local stakeholders.

Council Presentation Recap

Thanh gave a brief overview of the presentation she and Bill Jones gave to City Council on September 23. The presentation can be viewed online here: http://harrisonburg-va.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=4&clip_id=212&meta_id=11583. Thanh and Bill will return to City Council on November 11 to present proposed stormwater utility fee.

A SWAC member asked if any comments from the public have been received. Thanh replied that the City put out a press release and posted information on Be Heard Harrisonburg, and comments have been received through Be Heard Harrisonburg. She has also received emails from citizens with questions

about whether the city storm sewer system is separate from the sanitary sewer system (the answer is yes), stating that comments so far have been mostly inquisitive in nature. More information and a link to Be Heard Harrisonburg can be found here: <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/stormwater-utility>.

Stormwater Utility Credits, Nutrient Trading Credits, and TMDLs

This presentation was deferred until next month.

There was some brief discussion about DEQ guidance for nutrient trading for MS4 operators, which is forthcoming. Thanh emphasized that if a stormwater management practice was done on a property, a property owner cannot double dip by selling or trading nutrient credits through the exchange *and* get a fee reduction on their stormwater utility fee.

Tom stated that for future MS4 permit cycles, requiring greater pollution reduction, the City may seek to diversify how it meets the Chesapeake Bay TMDL pollution reduction requirements by constructing stormwater management projects *and* purchasing nutrient credits.

Public Outreach

a. Update on Community Groups Outreach

City staff and SWAC members provided updates on stakeholder meetings with local associations and churches. They have received good questions from the stakeholders. Additional meetings are forthcoming.

For groups that city staff and SWAC are unable to meet with prior to the Public Input Meetings, Thanh will develop an electronic flyer or FAQ that can be emailed to stakeholder groups and their members.

b. Stormwater Utility Public Input Meetings

Public Input Meetings will be on:

- November 12, 2014 5:30 – 7:30PM Thomas Harrison Middle School
- December 2, 2014 5:30 – 7:30PM Spotswood Elementary School

c. Open House

The display boards for the Public Input Meetings will be shared with the SWAC at the November meeting.

d. Mock Q&A

City staff and SWAC members took turns asking each other questions and practiced answering them in preparation for the Public Input Meetings. A summary of these questions are provided on the attached Potential Questions from the Public.

General Questions / Discussion

Thanh stated that it will be very important for SWAC members to be present at the November SWAC meeting. The meeting is likely to also run longer than usual, due to the amount of content to be covered, including proposed stormwater utility fee, nutrient trading/ credits, proposed stormwater utility credit guidance manual, public input information, etc.

Next Steps / Assignments

SWAC members and city staff will continue to meet with property owners and stakeholder groups.